

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1773

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 9303

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA THREE)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PK, AF

SUBJ: GOP'S FORWARD POLICY IN TRIBAL AREAS

REF: KABUL 7446; ISLAMABAD 9076; TEHRAN 7326.

FOLLOWING RECEIVED FROM CONSUL PESHAWAR

1. REPORTS REACHING CONSULATE DURING PAST MONTH INDICATE THAT GOP HAS RECENTLY BEEN FOLLOWING A MORE "FORWARD" POLICY WITH RESPECT TO TRIBAL AREAS OF NWFP THEN IT WAS PRIOR TO JULY COUP IN AFGHANISTAN.

2. MAJOR EFFORT OF GOVERNMENT DURING PAST SEVERAL MONTHS REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN TO EXPAND RECRUITMENT FOR SCOUT UNITS IN TRIBAL AGENCIES AND TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL
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TROOP STRENGTH FOR SCOUTS FROM RANKS OF REGULAR ARMY.

NEW SCOUT FORCE KNOWN AS SHALWAR SCOUTS HAS BEEN FORMED IN NORTH AND SOUTH WAZIRISTAN AND RECRUITMENT NOW UNDERWAY TO CREATE FIRST SCOUT FORCE IN HISTORY OF MOHMAND AGENCY. AS PART OF PLAN TO STRENGTHEN POSITION IN SENSITIVE SOUTHERN TRIBAL AREAS, GOVERNMENT LAST AUGUST DECIDED TO MOVE SCOUTS AND REGULAR TROOPS INTO OLD BRITISH CANTONMENT IN RAZMAK IN SOUTHERN PART OF NORTH WAZIRISTAN. TO SOME OBSERVERS, THIS DECISION PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY OTHER SEEMED TO SYMBOLIZE GOVERNMENT'S NEW FORWARD POLICY SINCE RAZMAK HAS NOT BEEN OCCUPIED BY PAKISTAN FORCES SINCE 1947.

3. GOVERNMENT IS MAKING PLANS TO EXTEND ITS INFLUENCE TO THE AREA OCCUPIED BY THE UPPER MOHMAND TRIBES OF MOHMAND AGENCY. IN AUGUST IT GAVE APPROVAL FOR CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD WHICH WOULD EXTEND 15-MILE BRITISH-BUILT ROAD IN SOUTHEASTERN PART OF AGENCY ALL THE WAY TO BAJAUR BORDER. RECENT GOVERNMENT EFFORTS HAVE BEEN FOCUSED ON WINNING SUPPORT FOR THIS ROAD FROM INFLUENTIAL TRIBAL MALIKS BELONGING TO BOTH UPPER AND LOWER MOHMAND TRIBES. ACCORDING TO ONE TRIBAL MALIK SOURCE, THE UPPER MOHMAND TRIBAL LEADERS HAVE OVERCOME THEIR INITIAL PREJUDICES AGAINST THE ROAD AND APPARENTLY ARE URGING GOP TO PROCEED WITH CONSTRUCTION. MAIN OPPOSITION TO ROAD REPORTEDLY HAS COME FROM LEADERS OF THE LOWER MOHMAND TRIBE OF HALIM ZAI WHO ARE CONVINCED THAT BOTH THEIR INFLUENCE WITH GOVERNMENT AND THEIR FINANCIAL SUBSIDIES WILL BE REDUCED ONCE GOVERNMENT MAKES MEANINGFUL CONTACT WITH HITHERTO ISOLATED UPPER MOHMAND TRIBES. DURING PAST SEVERAL WEEKS HALIM ZAI TRIBESMEN HAVE BEEN SHOWING THEIR DISAPPROVAL OF ROAD BY FIRING ON GOVERNMENT TROOPS OPERATING NEAR VILLAGE OF YUSEF KHEL IN SOUTHERN PART OF AGENCY.

4. COMMENT: PRINCE BHUTTO MAY BE EXPECTED TO SHED FURTHER LIGHT ON GOP FORWARD POLICY WHEN HE MAKES SPECIAL TRIP TO NWFP TRIBAL AGENCIES NEXT MONTH.
SOBER

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